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MINISTERIAL DEVOTEDNESS.

A SERMON

PREACHED

IN THE CHAPEL OF LAMBETH PALACE,

On Sunday, April 29, 1832,

AT THE CONSECRATION OF

THE RIGHT REV. DANIEL WILSON, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM DEALTRY, D.D. F.R.S.

RECTOR OF CLAPHAM AND CHANCELLOR OF THE DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER.

LONDON:

J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

H. N. BATTEN, CLAPHAM.

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TO

THE MOST REVEREND

WILLIAM,

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

This Sermon,

PUBLISHED BY HIS GRACE'S COMMAND,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

A SERMON.

Acts xx. 24.

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy; and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

There are few passages even in the sacred writings, not being immediately connected with the personal history of our blessed Lord, which appeal more forcibly to our feelings than the account of the last interview between St. Paul and the elders of the church of Ephesus. We need no evidence beyond the narrative itself, to show how these Christians loved one another; and when we dwell especially upon the recollections, which they mutually had, of exhortations delivered by the apostle, *publicly and*

*from house to house;** and of warnings which, *by the space of three years,* he had not ceased to address *to every one, night and day, with tears,*† we feel that it required no common effort, and no ordinary motive, for such a minister to bid farewell to such a congregation. And with what views was he leaving them? Was it for a station of worldly ease? for friends more affectionate or churches more flourishing? *I go,* saith he, *bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me.*‡ But did he pause then in his course? When Providence called him to other fields of labour, did he hesitate to obey the call? He had put his hand to the plough, and he would not look back; the mind which did not suffer itself to be diverted from the path of duty by the tears of Christian friendship and its own tender affections, was not to be terrified by any outward hardships. *None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

* Acts xx. 20. † Id. ver. 31. ‡ Id. ver. 22, 23.

The great objects in the view of the apostle were two. One, which should equally engage the attention of every Christian; the other, belonging more particularly to his station and office in the church.

His first object was, that he might *finish his course with joy:* that, when he should come to his dying hour, he might enjoy that peace which passeth understanding, and depart out of this world in the full hope of a blessed immortality. Hence, he felt the immeasurable importance of giving all diligence to *make* his own *calling and election sure.** While exhorting others to *run the race set before them,*† *to fight the good fight of faith,* and to *lay hold on eternal life,*‡ he knew that this was the only way of safety for himself, and he pursued it with all the ardour and energy of his mind. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*§ Neither was there any stage of his Christian progress in which he deemed himself at liberty to neglect his own salvation, or relax his

* 2 Peter i. 10.

† Heb. xii. 1.

‡ 1 Tim. vi. 12.

§ 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27.

exertion to secure it. His language still was, *This one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**

But this happy termination of his course must likewise have been very closely associated with the discharge of his sacred obligations as a minister of Christ. The grand business of his life, the very end for which the Lord had appointed him, as a chosen vessel to himself, was to *bear his name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel,*† to *preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;*‡ to make known the way of salvation by faith in a crucified Saviour, and to invite every man who heard him, *whether Greek or barbarian, whether wise or unwise,*§ to share in the fulness of its blessings. His commission was as wide as the world—*to preach the gospel to every creature.*

That gospel is here emphatically represented as the *gospel of the grace of God.* A more striking and com-

* Phil. iii. 13, 14.

† Acts ix. 15.

‡ Eph. iii. 8.

§ Rom. i. 14.

prehensive description of it can scarcely be conceived. The glad tidings of God's mercy to mankind: the message of reconciliation, unmerited by men, and arising exclusively from the goodness of the Lord, yet announcing, even to the chief of sinners, the forgiveness of sin, and present peace and life everlasting. *The gospel of the grace of God!* a subject which fills with inexpressible admiration and delight every faithful and enlightened member of the church of Christ upon earth, but which will never be seen in all the magnitude of its dimensions, till we behold the countless multitudes of the redeemed in the kingdom of God, and unite in their songs of praise *unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.**

And this gospel it was the apostle's object to *testify;* not merely to preach it, but to preach it with energy, like one who was perfectly convinced of the truth of it, and could bear witness to its power; establishing it by such arguments as ought to carry conviction to every honest and candid mind; never shrinking from the avowal of his own entire trust in it; never compromising its principles; but bearing evidence to it as a faithful

* Rev. i. 5.

revelation, and worthy of all men to be received, whatever were the prejudices or whatever the rank of his hearers; *testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**

How well the *practice* of the apostle corresponded with this view of his avowed *intention,* might be shown from the general tenor of his writings, and the entire narrative of his public ministry. When we listen to him, for instance, announcing to the philosophers of Athens, in allusion to their altar, inscribed To THE UNKNOWN GOD, *Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you;*† and following up his persuasive appeal to their understandings, by telling them of the last great day, and adducing, as conclusive evidence of it, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead:‡ when we hear him declaring to the multitudes of Jerusalem,§ as afterwards to king Agrippa,‖ the history of his conversion to the faith of Christ; or reasoning, in the presence of Felix, of *righteousness, temperance and judgment to come,*¶ till the man of authority trembled before his prisoner; we feel how exact and how just is

* Acts xx. 21. † Acts xvii. 23. ‡ Id. ver. 31.
§ Acts xxii. ‖ Id. xxvi. ¶ Id. xxiv. 25.

the language, which on different occasions describes him, in varied expressions, but to the same import, as *declaring the testimony of God,** as *bearing testimony concerning* Christ,† as *his witness unto all men of what he had seen and heard,‡ as a witness both of those things which he had seen, and of those things in the which Christ would appear unto him,§ as testifying the gospel of the grace of God.* How admirably does it represent to us the immovable conviction of his own mind as to the truth of his statements, and that holy confidence and energy with which he proclaimed and enforced them!

Such were the two great OBJECTS of the apostle; and for these he avows himself ready to meet the most painful trials, even to the sacrifice of life itself. We have, in this passage, not the statement of a moralist who reasons about troubles of which he has no apprehension; not the idle assertions of a man nursed in the lap of ease, whose enjoyments are abundant, while his hardships are imaginary: but the solemn declaration of one who had already experienced great persecution, and who

* 1 Cor. ii. 1.

† Acts xxii. 18.

‡ Acts xxii. 15.

§ Id. xxvi. 16.

was verily persuaded that so long as he should continue to *testify the gospel* this would be his inevitable lot.

The expected trials soon came, and he showed himself prepared to meet them. The whole remaining history of his life vindicates most nobly the strong assurance in the text, and proves that on this, as on every other occasion, he spake the words of truth and soberness. Under the personal violence which, at the close of this very journey, he experienced at Jerusalem; and his long imprisonment at Cæsarea; and the bonds of which he so pathetically makes mention before Agrippa;* and his two imprisonments at Rome, of which the last, as he foresaw, could lead only to martyrdom; we observe in him the same Christian elevation of character, the same Christian resolution to witness a good confession. It was during this period that he expressed to the church at Philippi his willingness, even with joy and rejoicing, *to be offered upon the sacrifice and service of their faith:*† and his *earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing he should be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also*—when he was to appear before the emperor himself—*Christ should be mag-*

* Acts xxvi. 29.

† Phil. ii. 17.

*nified in his body, whether it were by life or by death.** It was in this period, and toward the close of it, that when deserted by all his friends, and cast as it were into the very mouth of the lion, he tells his beloved son Timothy, *The Lord stood with me and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear.*† To the last, even when he was *now ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand,* ‡ his whole conduct and spirit bore witness to the truth of the declaration, *None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself.*

It is impossible to contemplate this devotedness of St. Paul to the work of the ministry, without feeling that it must have engaged the best affections of his heart; and we pause to ask ourselves, not without deep interest in the question, what were the prevailing motives which impelled him to such zealous, unwearied, and uncompromising exertion? accompanied also by sufferings, which made him *a spectacle,* as it were, *unto the world, and to angels, and to men.*§

* Phil. i. 20.

† 2 Tim. iv. 17.

‡ 2 Tim. iv. 6.

§ 1 Cor. iv. 9.

For a satisfactory answer, it is scarcely necessary to look beyond this address to the elders of Ephesus. The apostle, in speaking of his ministry, adds a few words, which, to a careless reader, might seem to be nearly superfluous; but proceeding from the fulness of his heart, they furnish an instructive view of his character and feelings:—*The ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus.* How dignified then must be the office! how sacred the trust! how solemn its obligations! how animating the reflections which the remembrance of that fact could never fail to awaken!

And we have, in his writings, distinct evidence that he felt all the force of the argument, and that it furnished him with the strongest motives to faithfulness and diligence in his high vocation.

Hence, the imperative duty to preach the word. *Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.**

Hence, a motive for perseverance in the work: *Seeing*

* 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17.

*we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.**

It inspired him with a holy determination, that whatever were the judgment of his fellow-creatures, he would affirm and maintain the truth in all its simplicity, its purity, and its fulness. *I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man: For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ:*† and, *Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*‡

It filled him with the spirit of admiring and adoring gratitude. What had he done to deserve such a distinction? or what return could he make for the grace thus bestowed upon him? Upon this subject also we have his own decisive testimony. Whilst speaking to Timothy of *the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which had been committed to his trust,* he thus describes the nature of his feelings:—*I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a*

* 2 Cor. iv. 1. † Gal. i. 11, 12.

‡ Id. ver. 8.

*persecutor, and injurious:** he can scarcely mention the circumstance without, tacitly at least, intimating his astonishment that such a person could have been so favoured:—*But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief.*

There is, perhaps, no feature in the apostle's character more remarkable, than his love to the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we have the grand, inspiring principle, which carried him onward, with constraining influence, through the whole scene of his labours and his sufferings. And this is, doubtless, the disposition which we should expect peculiarly to shine forth, and to abound in him.

If one, to whom much was forgiven, loved much,† what must have been the ardour of affection in the heart of that chosen minister, who was appointed to preach the faith *which once he destroyed*,‡ and to testify to all men, the gospel of that Saviour whom he had once so fiercely persecuted!

So intimately is the love of Christ connected with love to our fellow-creatures, that we might confidently represent this love to man as exercising a powerful influ-

* 1 Tim. i. 12, 13. † Luke vii. 47.

‡ Gal. i. 23.

ence upon the mind of St. Paul: and how many are the proofs of it, which appear in his writings!

With what affection, for example, did he dwell upon the state of his unhappy and hostile countrymen! *having great heaviness,* on their account, *and continual sorrow in his heart; wishing* even *that himself were accursed from Christ*—deprived of the Christian ordinances which he so highly valued—*for his brethren, his kinsmen, according to the flesh.**

With what tenderness did he regard his converts and brethren in the faith! *exhorting, and comforting, and charging every one of them, as a father doth his children, willing to have imparted unto them, not the gospel of God only, but also his own soul, because they were dear unto him.*† Such are the terms in which he addresses the Thessalonians. What a comment upon them do we possess in his farewell to the elders of Ephesus!

But neither was his charity confined to his brethren after the flesh, or to the partakers of like precious faith with himself; knowing that *God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,*‡ he extended his regards to the whole human race;

* Rom. ix. 2, 3. † 1 Thess. ii. 11. 8. ‡ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

he felt the importance of salvation to men of every class and of every country; and there were none to whom he would not have rejoiced to proclaim it; willing to be *made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.**

Is it necessary to adduce any additional motive as urging the apostle to exertion and endurance? There was one, which immediately and personally affected himself. Was it one great object of his care *to finish his course with joy?* Did he for this put forth his strength in the Christian race, and wield the weapons of the Spirit in the Christian combat? But how hopeless would have been the desired termination of his course, if his paramount obligations as a minister of Christ had been forgotten or neglected! What would have been his feelings, in the immediate prospect of dissolution, if his conscience had reproached him with unfaithfulness in discharging the ministry, *which he had received of the Lord Jesus!* What a comfort, on the contrary, if, at such a season, he could appeal to his friends around him, as he did to those who met him at Miletus, *I take you to*

* 1 Cor. ix. 22.

*record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men.** How delightful, on the retrospect of life, if he could repeat the statement once made to the Corinthians—*Our rejoicing is this; the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.*† This was not a pharisaical principle: the very terms of the statement ascribe every thing that was good in him to the grace of God: whatever were the record of his past services, whether it respected his labours, his sufferings, or his success, he would still say, *Not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*‡ Could it be any diminution of his happiness, that it was associated with gratitude? *That* feeling would add largely to his joy. He would rejoice in the thought, that as it was the grace of God which first put him into the ministry, and qualified him for the discharge of it, so was it the same heavenly grace, which had enabled him to adorn his profession, and had *made manifest by him the savour of* divine *knowledge in every place.*§ And conscious of that goodness and mercy which had followed him through

* Acts xx. 26.
† 2 Cor. i. 12.
‡ 1 Cor. xv. 10.
§ 2 Cor. ii. 14.

the whole course of his ministrations, he would be fortified in the belief, that he should not be forsaken at last; and would look forward, with the assurance of hope, to a gracious recompence in the day of the Lord.

While we behold, therefore, with admiration, the holy indifference of the Apostle, as to all the troubles and afflictions which might come upon him in the fulfilment of his ministry, was there not an adequate cause for that feeling in the reflection, suggested by himself, that this *ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus?*

Would he not find, likewise, a *present* recompence for many toils and many sufferings in the success vouchsafed to him by the conversion of sinners, in the work of *building up* his converts *on their most holy faith*,* in the Christian affection of the members of the several churches, and in the knowledge that his *children walked in truth?*† Could he be thus instrumental in promoting the glory of Christ, and extending His kingdom, without rejoicing that, in such a cause, he was counted worthy to suffer?

There was, yet further, the strong conviction, that all the painful appointments which befell him, should

* Jude 20. † 3 John 4.

*turn to his salvation through the prayers of the churches, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ:** that they should even *work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*† Well might he say, *None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself!* How light and momentary, to a mind like his, must all afflictions seem, when contrasted with the prospect of heaven and immortality!

It is not to be denied, that the case of St. Paul was in some respects peculiar: his call to the apostleship, and many of the circumstances connected with the fulfilment of his office, were such as have not been known in these later ages, nor indeed in the case of any other human being.

But, to every minister of the gospel, lawfully called, a dispensation has been as truly committed by the Lord Jesus. Every minister has essentially the same obligations to preach the gospel; and from the example and spirit of St. Paul, he may learn how he ought to fulfil them.

The Christian missionary, also, however humble his station, is one to whom this subject would, doubtless, be applicable: the man who, for Christ's sake, leaves his

* Phil. i. 19. † 2 Cor. iv. 17.

kindred and his home, to carry the glad tidings of salvation into dark and distant lands; what need has he of that self-denying spirit, and of that holy elevation of character, which so eminently distinguished the great apostle of the Gentiles, and of which he gave such affecting evidence in this parting interview with his friends at Miletus!

But more especially suited is this subject, both in itself and in the circumstances connected with it, to the solemnities of this day. If it be true, in the case of the missionary, that he has to forsake, in the first instance, all that he most loves and values upon earth, the intercourse of family connexions, and the sympathies of personal friendship, and the society of many with whom he had taken sweet counsel, and to whom he had perhaps been united in the endearing relation of a minister to his flock—a relation, which speaks much of mutual affections and mutual prayers;—will the separation be less painful to him, who, from the very circumstance of his being summoned to the highest office in the Eastern church, must be supposed to have held no unimportant station in the church at home, and has, in all likelihood, for a long series of years, been testifying faithfully and effectively *the gospel of the grace of God?* In turning to

those persons whom, from their childhood, he has been training for heaven, to others who have long regarded him as their pastor and their friend, and to all within the circle of his acquaintance, who have esteemed him *very highly in love for his work's sake*,* he feels that it is no common bond, which is now to be dissolved; and there must be on both sides the painful reflection, that here they will probably meet no more.

And is there no anxiety connected with his new duties and his future prospects?

Happily in that part of the world to which our attention is at present directed, the minister of Jesus Christ, whatever be his rank or description, incurs little danger of bonds and imprisonment and a violent death: yet will the ministerial office necessarily involve great responsibility, and expose him to many difficulties unknown in a Christian land; and to whom can such an observation apply so forcibly as to him, who, in addition to his other cares, has the *care of all the churches?* †

The duties of the subordinate clergyman lie in the district immediately around him; and to that district his labours will generally be confined. The Bishop must in India, as in other countries, be the counsellor of

* 1 Thes. v. 13. † 2 Cor. xi. 28.

all who are placed under his jurisdiction, and must participate in the anxieties of all. We are compelled to acknowledge that the officiating ministers in our Eastern empire are comparatively few, and that many of our own countrymen, baptized into the faith of Christ and called by his name, are strangers to the regular ordinances of the gospel: but is this a fact which tends to release the chief pastor from anxiety? How painful must it be to him,—to *him* especially—to see them thus left as sheep without a shepherd! and, extending his view through the various provinces of the country, to reflect that, even if every minister were as zealous as St. Paul, there must still be many who profess themselves Christians, for whom there is no access to a house of prayer and to whom the Christian sabbath shines not as a sabbath of the Lord!

And this, too, in a land where the true God is generally unknown, and a debasing superstition, or idolatry as cruel as it is profligate, holds in bondage the great mass of the population. When St. Paul was at Athens, *his spirit was stirred in him* on seeing *the city wholly given to idolatry*.* Can a successor of St. Paul, resident in India, behold the moral and religious degra-

* Acts xvii. 16.

dation of nearly that entire continent, and not be affected by similar emotions? Although his own mission is not directly to heathens, yet must he feel intensely for the millions around him, who are living and dying in ignorance *of the only true God and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.** Upon his Christian zeal and Christian prudence and moderation, and the testimony which, both by his life and doctrine, he bears to the gospel, may depend in no mean degree, under the divine blessing, the extension of the kingdom of Christ through those wide and populous regions. *He* must of necessity be as a city set on an hill: he cannot be hid: the eyes of multitudes will be turned to him: and great need will he have of patience and faith and prayer, lest he faint under the weight of his responsibility, or be discouraged by the difficulties and disappointments which will assuredly meet him.

But we are speaking of future years of exertion, when on this occasion we cannot but be reminded how uncertain are all such prospects. The consecrations to the see of Calcutta, which these walls have witnessed within the last nine years, but too plainly forbid us

* John xvii. 3.

to indulge, on such a subject, in any very confident anticipations : and the successor of those four Bishops, who have within little more than that period finished their course in the East, must be prepared, not only to say with respect to ordinary difficulties and trials, *None of these things move me,* but to add, in the spirit of heartfelt devotedness to God, *Neither count I my life dear unto myself.*

But let us not forget also, what a glorious field of Christian enterprise is before him, and how many and how great are his encouragements !

He goes not into a country hitherto unvisited by the messengers of Christ : where not merely the fabric of the Christian temple is yet to be erected, but its foundation is still to be laid. By the blessing of God upon those who have gone before him, much has in this view undoubtedly been effected. They have laid the foundations, upon which he is to build : they have laboured, and he will enter into their labours ; carrying forward towards completion that system, in all its departments, which it was their privilege to commence, and which is suited so well, if God shall prosper the attempt, to perpetuate through distant generations the blessings of Christian civilization and Christian worship.

Was it, at no very distant period, an assertion confidently made, that if Great Britain were then to lose her power in the East, she would leave no monuments to prove that India had ever been in the possession of a Christian people? Thank God, that reproach upon the national character is past.

Without undervaluing the pious labours of other Christians, which, in fact, have long been a lesson to us, whether we look to the Roman Catholic or the Protestant, who successively went before us in our Eastern empire, we cannot but rejoice, that the national church can, at this day, point to many monuments of the interest which she feels in the spiritual state of the people. Many are her sacred buildings, which now gladden the moral wilderness of India, and many the native worshippers who join there in our own services of prayer and praise: and so long as that noble college which has risen up on the banks of the Hoogly shall attract the eye of the voyager in his approach to the first and greatest city of Bengal, he will recognize in it the Christian zeal, which, in giving birth to the institution, aimed at nothing less than enabling the various classes of the people to read, in their own tongues, the wonderful works of God.

If we should advert further to the striking indications of improvement, which are visible in the native population;—if, for example, we should turn to the schools now attended by that sex which, till very recently, was excluded from every privilege of instruction; or point out the converts, who have been gained from heathenism to the faith of Christ, the first-fruits, it may be hoped, of an abundant harvest: if we should contemplate that most interesting spectacle of the Syrian churches, preserved so wonderfully in a strange land, through a succession of ages, and retaining, to this hour, their usages as a Christian people, and their reverence for the word of God: or if, further, we should notice that thirst for European knowledge which now prevails to such an extent among the higher orders, especially of the natives of Calcutta, or their rapidly increasing acquaintance with the English language, the language of civilization and literature and religion; or the relaxing of that bond of caste which had for so many centuries held in subjection the very minds of the people;—we cannot but feel that a Christian bishop, in going out to India at this moment, has much to encourage him in the discharge of his arduous office.

Should it please God to preserve him for a few years, he may reasonably hope to see the public mind in that interesting region awaking to a sense of duty and gratitude to the common Father and Saviour of mankind; and, through the medium particularly of Christian education and the circulation of the Holy Scriptures and the increased efforts of European and native teachers, may have the satisfaction to behold the church *enlarging the place of her tent, stretching forth the curtains of her habitations, and lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes;** himself meanwhile contributing to that end, by his care and diligence in promoting the spiritual interests of those over whom he more immediately presides, as well as by the judicious exercise of his authority, the combined energy and moderation of his character, the wisdom of his counsels, and the beneficial force of his example.

But, whatever should be the will of Divine Providence concerning him, let him go forth with the assurance that, in leaving his native shores, he will not be forgotten by those who remain behind him. Many will be the supplications offered on his behalf in the retire-

* Isaiah liv. 2.

ment of the closet; and in the prayers which ascend from the sanctuary, his name will not be forgotten. Neither will that testimony of affectionate regard be confined to those who have had the benefit of his personal ministrations: not a few are to be found both at home and abroad, who, having never seen his face in the flesh, but knowing well the services which he has rendered to the cause of holy truth, will fervently wish him *God speed*, and rejoice in his welfare and success.

May it please God to hear from heaven, his dwelling place, these united supplications! May his servant, to whom this great charge is committed, be carried in safety over the deep, and be preserved in health to prosecute with vigour his arduous duties! may that Saviour whose gospel he testifies, and who has promised to be with his ministers even to the end of the world, sustain him under his trials and bless his ministrations: and, when at length he shall be called to rest from his labours, may he be able to say in the language and in the spirit of St. Paul, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall*

*give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.**

Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.†

* 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, † Jude 24, 25.

LONDON:
IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

Lately published, by the same Author,

SERMONS,

CHIEFLY PRACTICAL,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF CLAPHAM, SURREY.

Second Edition. Price 10*s.* 6*d. boards.*

PRINTED FOR J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

24 JUN 1828

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